TYRANNY AND KNOWLEDGE

The relationship between a tyrant and his subjects is like a powerful but deceiving guardian who manages the wealth of orphans as he wishes as long as they are young and weak. A corrupt guardian is not interested in having the orphans mature, and similarly, a tyrant does not want his subject to be enlightened by knowledge.

The tyrant knows very well, no matter how stupid he is, that oppression and enslavement are not possible unless the subjects are stupid and completely lost in the darkness of ignorance. If the tyrant were a bird, it would be a bat that can hunt insects (the commons) in the darkness of obscurity, and if it were an animal, it would be a fox that may eat the chickens under cover of darkness, but in mankind's world, the one who knows is the one who can hunt the ignorant.

Knowledge is an inspiration by the light of God. God created light for clear vision, warmth, and energy, and similarly made knowledge to clarify righteousness and to expose evil. It drives warmth in the souls and pride in the minds. Knowledge is light, and ignorance is darkness. It is the nature of light to disperse darkness. If one examines the relationship between any manager and employee, it would be clear that the authority of the manager would be stronger or weaker according to deficiency or increase in knowledge of the employee.

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A tyrant does not fear literature that is interested in proper speech and style, as most of it is playfulness, delusion, and waste of time. Yes, he does not fear language science unless it supports wisdom and drives enthusiasm that may encourage defiance, or eloquent style that may drive armies, because he knows that great speakers, such as Al-Kumayt,[1] Hassan,[2] Montesquieu,[3] or Schiller[4] are rare.

Also, tyrants are not afraid of religious studies that are concerned with the Judgment Day and personal relations between a person and God, because he thinks it does not enlighten. It only keeps people occupied with such learning until they waste their time and fill their minds with such information, and they feel vanity and arrogance to a degree where they do not see any other knowledge but their own. Then, the tyrant feels safe and secure, for they become like an intoxicated drunk man. If some of them became unusually bright, and get followers and become respected by the commons, the tyrant always finds a way to use them to support him and his ideas by fooling them with some false glorifications and shuts them up with some leftovers of the feast of tyranny.

Tyrants also do not fear purely technical science, because those who study it are usually peaceful, without high ambition and can be bought with little money and praise. They do not fear materialists because most of them are selfish. Tyrants do not fear athletes because most of them are short-sighted.

Tyrants are most concerned about social studies, such as philosophy, human rights, sociology, civil politics, history, public speaking, and similar studies that expand knowledge and aspirations, teach people about their rights and alert them to their deficiencies, and how to demand their rights and how to get them and keep them. A tyrant's worst fear is scholars with such knowledge who are motivated to educate people using public speeches and writings. These are the ones referred to in the

Quran as the righteous and good reformers in the verse: "My servants the righteous, shall inherit the earth" (Quran 21:105), and "Nor would thy Lord be the One to destroy communities for a single wrongdoing, if its members were likely to mend" (Quran 11:117). Unfortunately, scholars serving tyrants explained righteousness and reformation as devotion to prayers and twisted the meaning of corruption and decay from disruption of God's order to objection against the tyrant!

In summary, tyrants fear knowledgeable persons who are motivated and active, wise and teaching wisdom, not hypocrite scholars, or those who stuffed their heads with much recorded information and walk around like closed libraries.

Tyrants hate knowledge, not only because of its consequences, but also because knowledge has authority above all authorities. The tyrant must despise himself every time he encounters someone who is more knowledgeable than himself. A tyrant does not like to see the face of anyone who is more knowledgeable or considered a better thinker, and if he needed a physician or an engineer, he selects the stupid, the insignificant and the hypocrite. This is the nature of all tyrants, even most people, that is why they praise the modest and those who are inconsiderable and good for nothing.

It is concluded that a war always stirs up between tyranny and knowledge: Scholars yearn to enlighten the minds and the tyrant strives to blow out its light. They both try to attract the attention of the public, but who are the public? They are those who are afraid when ignorant and surrender when frightened. They are also the ones who may speak up when they learn and may act when they know.

The public is the power of the tyrant and his sustenance. He uses them to control them. He enslaves them and they are happy with his torture. He exploits their wealth, and they praise him for keeping them alive. He humiliates them and they praise his

glory. He lures them against each other, and they glorify his policies. If he squanders their fortune, they claim he is generous. If he kills some of them without disfigurement, they consider him merciful. He drives them to sure death, and they obey him fearing reprimand. If some proud people revolt against him, he will fight them as terrorists.

The result is that people slaughter themselves by their own hands because of fear that originates from ignorance and stupidity. If ignorance is lifted and the mind is enlightened, fear will disappear, and people will not be led to harm against their will. It is said that a wise man does not serve any but himself. In such a condition, a tyrant must resign or become fair and just. Some nations during their progress forced bad dictators to change and become progressive as well, against his nature, and to become a faithful guardian concerned about accountability, a fair leader who fears revenge, and a patient father who enjoys love and affection. Only then may a nation achieve a satisfactory life of prosperity and progress, a life of dignity and happiness. The leader then will also get the best of luck and satisfaction after he was miserable in tyranny when he was surrounded with danger and hatred, insecure about his throne, even afraid for his life as he did not find anyone to give him honest advice about what he did not know. People around him are always afraid of him, and their minds are always confused about right and wrong, and they miss recognizing what is correct. And when they do, they do not dare to declare it before knowing what the tyrant prefers. If they feel the chief is adamant about his opinion, then they would not have any choice but to go along and agree with him, even if his wish were incorrect or unjust. Any consultant who claims that he is not afraid is a liar. The truth is that honesty does not dwell in the palaces of kings. A tyrant does not benefit at all from the opinions of others, for he lives in deception, hesitation, agony, and fear. That is enough revenge for enslaving people who are created free.

The fear of a tyrant of his own people's indignation is more than their fear of his violence because his fear stems from his knowledge about what he really deserves, while their fear originates from their ignorance. His fear comes from his real weakness, while their fear is out of lassitude. His fear is for losing his life and throne, while their fear is losing their ability to feed and to live in a place they can replace with another someday. He is afraid for everything in his kingdom, while they are afraid about nothing but their miserable lives.

The more oppression implemented by the tyrant, the more fearsome he becomes of his people and even of his close team and bodyguards. He fears even his own imagination and obsessions. Tyrants end up with complete madness, and I said "madness" because a tyrant is always foolish because he ignores seeking the truth. If a tyrant happens not to be foolish, he dies early due to rage, madness, or dementia. I also mentioned that tyrants are usually afraid of their own team because most tyrants are killed by their own bodyguards or their surrounding assistants, because they are usually the most miserable. They commit all horrible crimes for the tyrant who makes them always concerned about what they did, and always trying to figure out what he wants them to do without explicitly declaring it. He may be angry with them and humiliate them if they did not predict his future wishes, and who can tell the future except prophets? They are miserable! May God forgive us, for no one knows destiny, even prophets and good people, and no one claims this but shamans, and no one believes his predictions but a fool. O' God, you told us the truth: "He (alone) knows the Unseen, nor does He make anyone acquainted with His Mysteries" (Quran 72:26), and the best of your prophets said: "Had I known the future, I would have had much wealth."[5]

One of the rules applied by careful historians is that when one wants to compare tyrants, such as Nero[6] and Tamerlane,[7] it is

enough to compare their cautiousness and precaution, and if one wanted to compare between two just rulers, such as Anushiravan[8] and Omar,[9] he compares the degree of their safety when living with their people.

Since most religions are based upon the concepts of good and evil, such as light and darkness, Sun and Saturn, mind and devil, some ancient nations recognized that the most harmful thing for mankind is ignorance, and the worst results of ignorance is fear. So, they built special temples for fear to be safe from its harm.

A political observer said: I see that the palace of a tyrant is the temple of fear itself, in which the mighty tyrant is the God, his adherents are the priests, his library is the holy altar, and pens are the knives, rhetoric of glory is the prayers, and the people are the slaves who offer sacrifices to fear. Fear is the most important natural instinct in human beings. Man is closer to perfection when further away from fear. There is no way to alleviate fear or to eliminate it except through knowing the reality of the fearful issues and discovering that there is nothing to be afraid of about it. Thus, if the subordinates knew more, that the tyrant is a weak person just like them, they will not be afraid of him anymore, and will demand from him their rights.

Theorists say that the best indicator of the severity of tyranny of a governments is its exaggeration in glorification of kings, grandeur of palaces, splendor of celebrations, magnificence of ceremonies, and similar deceptive features used by kings to frighten their subjects instead of true reason and sincere modesty. These deceptions are used by the tyrants in a way like the lowly person falsely glorifying himself, the ignorant uses Sufism, the liar resorts to swearing, and the poor to decorated clothes.

It is also noted that one can figure out the level of oppression implemented on a nation by studying its language and identifying whether it has few glorification words, such as the Arabic language, or is it full of expressions of enslavement and submis-

sion, such as the Persian language, and other languages that do not use "me" and "you" in conversations but use "my master" and "your slave."

In summary, tyranny and knowledge are contrary to each other. Every tyrant's administration tries its best to put out the light of knowledge and to keep its subjects in the darkness of ignorance. Learned and wise men who may grow up in the narrow fissures between the dry hard rocks of tyranny try their best to enlighten people. Usually, the servants of the tyrants chase them and try to intimidate them. The lucky ones are those who can escape and leave their countries, and that is the reason behind the fact that all great prophets, God bless them, moved around many places, and frequently died in foreign lands.

Islam is the first religion that encouraged learning. Enough evidence for this is that the first word that was revealed of the Quran was a repeated command to "Read," and the first emphasized blessing from God on human beings is that He made them learn by "the pen" what they did not know before. Early Muslims understood from the meaning of this command and this emphasis that every Muslim must learn how to read and write, and literacy became widespread between Muslims. Learning and knowledge became free in the nation and available to all, not only to clergymen or nobles as it was in previous nations. Knowledge spread from Muslims to all nations. But, may God curse tyranny that humiliated knowledge and made it like a cheap irrelevant commodity given to illiterates and the ignorant without any value. Yes, may God curse tyranny that retarded the nation into illiteracy, and there is neither ability nor power except with God.

Researchers said that the worst fear of knowledge by Western dictators is when people know that freedom is better than life, and become aware of virtues, such as dignity, honor, and glory, and learn about their rights and how to keep them, and about

oppression and how to defeat it, humanity and its duties, and the pleasures of mercy and piety.

While Eastern tyrants fear knowledge, as if it is made of fire and their bodies made of gunpowder. Tyrants are afraid of knowledge, even from people learning the true meaning of "There is no God but Allah," and why it is considered the best prayer, and why it is considered a pillar of Islam. Islam and all religions are based upon "There is no God but Allah" which means that people should not worship any entity but the Great Creator. The meaning of "worship" is "submission," and thus, the meaning of "There is no God but Allah" is that there is nothing worthy of being submissive or enslaved to except God. It is good to repeatedly recall this meaning in our minds day and night to avoid falling victim to worshiping anyone but God alone. That is why tyrants do not like their subjects to learn that there is no sovereignty and no enslavement in Islam, no mastery or submission, except to that all believers are brothers who support each other. No, this does not suit tyrants, and they may consider "There is no God but Allah" as an insult to themselves. That is why tyrants are supporters of polytheism and enemies of knowledge.

Knowledge is also inconvenient to small dictators, such as arrogant clergymen, ignorant fathers, and directors of all weak societies. In conclusion, when the light of knowledge spreads in a nation, the chains of tyranny will be broken, and the fate of tyrants in politics and religion will end.